

## **POSSIBLE CHANGES TO REGULATIONS FOR OYSTERS Commercial Divers and Attendants**

The department needs to update regulations for commercial oyster divers and required attendants based on legislation.

House Bill 1137, which addressed commercial oyster divers, was passed during the 2018 legislative session. The bill modifies Natural Resources Article, 4-1015.1, Annotated Code of Maryland and becomes effective October 1, 2018. This bill modifies the tidal fish license and oyster authorization requirements for persons aboard a boat who are using diving apparatus to catch oysters for commercial purposes from the waters of the State. Further, the bill alters the catch limits for certain commercial oyster divers. The bill prohibits more than two commercial oyster divers from working on a boat at a time. Additionally, the bill limits the oyster catch to no more than twice the daily limit as written in regulation, and requires each commercial oyster diver to have an attendant on the boat. The department needs to add the number of divers per vessel and the attendant requirements to regulation.